

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Todd Akin (R-Mo.), Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Seapower & Expeditionary Forces Subcommittee, today commended the Secretary of the Navy for fast action in completing a cost-saving multiyear procurement contract for 124 F/A-18E/F/G aircraft, saving the Navy and taxpayers almost \$600 million.

Akin released the following statement:

“Fast action by the Navy today has saved taxpayers over half a billion dollars. By purchasing more much needed planes now, the Navy has taken a crucial step to addressing its looming fighter shortfall.”

“Our ability to defend our borders and quickly project force where it is most needed depends on well-equipped aircraft carriers and dependable fighter planes. I am pleased that this purchase will enable Carrier Strike Groups to perform their primary strategic role: to provide on-call Naval Air Power anywhere in the world at any time.”

“I am also pleased that this multiyear contract will keep Americans in the St. Louis region – and across the country – employed in building the planes our fighter pilots need.”

U.S. Rep. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (R-CA), Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee, also commented:

"Members of Congress and the Department of Defense have a duty to be responsible stewards of U.S. taxpayer dollars while strengthening America's defenses. By signing legislation this multiyear contract, the Navy has embraced an initiative pushed by House Republicans that will save nearly \$600 million and add much-needed airpower."

"These savings would not have been realized without the persistence of Congressman Akin. He was instrumental in convincing the Navy to enter into a multiyear contract to purchase more aircraft.

Ultimately, these are real savings that should be reinvested back into our national security priorities."

Today's multiyear contract was made possible by authorizing language from the Defense Authorization bill, which was signed by the President yesterday. The language, originally a standalone measure, H.R. 6102, was sponsored by Akin and Rep. Gene Taylor (D-MS) and authorized the Navy to enter into a multiyear procurement contract for the F/A-18s.

Akin has been championing an F/A-18 multiyear contract for more than two years as something that benefits both taxpayers and the Navy. In 2008, Akin inserted language into the *Defense Authorization Act*

requiring the Department of Defense to report to Congress on the potential cost savings of a multiyear contract for F/A-18's. In 2009, Congressman Akin successfully added an amendment to the

Defense Authorization Act

giving the Navy authority to enter into a multiyear contract for F/A-18's. In 2010, Congressman Akin added an amendment to the House-passed

Defense Authorization Act

adding eight additional F/A-18's to help address the Navy's looming fighter shortfall.